

LOOKING BACK OVER HALF A CENTURY:  
A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE NEW YORK STATE GEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

by

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FOREWORD

It is only fitting and proper to present the review of the Association's first fifty years at this 1978 Golden Anniversary meeting at Syracuse University, which more than any other New York State institution has been linked closely to the development of the Association. The call for the first meeting at Hamilton College (1925) came from the Geology Department of SU which also hosted the meetings of 1926, 1937, 1950 (Silver Anniversary) and 1964, that is at fairly regular intervals of approximately a dozen years.

The permanent record file of the Association served as principal source of information for this account which reflects some uncertainties due to the lack of complete data covering the early years. It was not until the election of a Permanent Secretary in 1953 that such a collection of records could be initiated and carried out with the help of many "old-time" members who donated copies of meeting announcements, field-trip itineraries and other pertinent information from their own files, a fact which was inscribed duly on each contribution. This valuable service to the Association hereby is gratefully acknowledged with particular thanks going to Dr. A. Scott Warthin, Jr., Professor Emeritus of Vassar College who supplied by far the greatest volume of material.

The reader is referred to Tables 1 and 2 accompanying this article for a summary of facts and statistics on the first 50 meetings of the Association.

IN THE BEGINNING  
(1925)

On 25 April 1925 a one-page letter addressed to "heads of departments of geology and others interested" was sent from Lyman Hall of Syracuse University, the location of the Geology Department. It contained the following pertinent information (verbatim excerpts are indicated by quotation marks):

Announcement of the "first annual intercollegiate field meeting of

Table 1. New York State Geological Association - 1925 to 1954.

Mtg No	Year	Host Institution	Mtg Locality	Dates	Type of Field Information (# of pp.)	President (*Field Director)	Secretary	Attendance
1	1925	Hamilton C	Clinton	5/15-16	Field Stops (2)	*Neilson C. Dale	Harry N. Eaton	
2	1926	Syracuse U	Syracuse	5/14-15	Field Stops (3)	*Harry N. Eaton	Harry N. Eaton	
3	1927	Vassar C	Poughkeepsie	5/6-7	Field Stops (4)	*Thomas M. Hills	Thomas E. Burling	
4	1928	Cornell U	Ithaca	5/11-12	Field Stops (5)	*Henrich Ries	O.D. von Engel	198
5	1929	St. Lawrence U	Gouverneur	5/17-18	Itinerary (3)	*Chas. A. Hartnagel	Harold L. Alling	199
6	1930	Union C	Schenectady	5/15-17	Itinerary (3)	Edward S. Smith	Harold L. Alling	
7	1931	Elmira C	Port Henry	5/15-16	Itinerary (8)	Harry N. Eaton	O.D. von Engel	
8	1932	U of Rochester	Rochester	5/13-14	Itinerary (7)	Harold L. Alling	J.E. Hoffmeister	
9	1933	Columbia U	Newburgh/NYC	5/12-13	Pamphlet (8)	Robert J. Colony	G. Marshall Kay	
10	1934	Colgate U	Hamilton	5/18-19	Itinerary (10)	Harold A. Whitnall	Towner B. Root	
11	1935	Hamilton C	Utica	5/10-11	Itinerary (11)	Nelson C. Dale	John T. Rouse	
12	1936	Penn Geol S	Scranton, PA	5/22-23	Itinerary (12)	Heinrich Ries	Joseph D. Burfoot	
13	1937	Syracuse U	Syracuse	5/14-15	Itinerary (7)	Lawrence W. Ploger	Earl T. Apfel	
14	1938	Buffalo M Nat Sci/U	Buffalo	5/13-15	Magazine (7)	Irving G. Reiman	Wm. P. Alexander	
15	1939	St. Lawrence U	Gouverneur	5/12-13	Itinerary (27)	Robert W. Brown	John S. Brown	
16	1940	ChC Town of Catskill	Catskill	4/26-27	Itinerary (27)	George H. Chadwick	Robert W. Jones	
17	1941	U of Rochester	Rochester	5/9-10	Itinerary (36)	J.E. Hoffmeister	J.E. Hoffmeister	
1942 through 1945 - No meetings during World War II.								
18	1946	Vassar C	Kingston	5/10-11	Itinerary (6)	Thomas M. Hills	A.S. Warthin Jr.	
19	1947	CCNY	NYC	5/9-10	Itinerary (16)	D.T. O'Connell	Cecil H. Kindle	
20	1948	Hamilton C	Clinton	4/30-5/2	Itinerary (11)	Nelson C. Dale	Robert H. Arndt	
21	1949	Cornell U	Ithaca	5/13-14	Booklet (35)	John W. Wells	W. Storrs Cole	
22	1950	Syracuse U	Syracuse	4/28-30	Booklet (35)	Earl T. Apfel	Earl T. Apfel	247
23	1951	NY State Geol S	Plattsburg	5/18-19	Booklet (42)	John G. Broughton	Survey Staff	
24	1952	Buffalo M Nat Sci/U	Buffalo	5/1-3	Booklet (25)	Edw. J. Buehler	Edw. J. Buehler	
25	1953	St. Lawrence U	Canton	4/30-5/2	Guidebook (21) (Ed J.J. Prucha)	Robert O. Bloomer	Robert O. Bloomer	
26	1954	Vassar C	Poughkeepsie	4/30-5/1	Itinerary (9)	John H. Johnsen	K.E. Lowe (Perm. Secy.)	146

Note: Unless otherwise noted, all localities mentioned are in New York State.

Abbreviations: C - College  
ChC - Chamber of Commerce  
CCNY - City College of NY

Ed - Editor  
Fld - Field  
M - Museum

Mtg - Meeting  
Nat Sci - Natural Science  
NYC - New York City

pp - pages  
S - Survey  
U - University

See Table 2 for 1955 through 1978.

Table 2. New York State Geological Association - 1955 to 1978.

Abbreviations: C - College  
 CoC - Community College  
 CCNY - City College of NY  
 CUNY - City University of NY

Mtg - Meeting  
 RPI - Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
 pp - pages  
 S - Survey

SUNY - State University of NY  
 TS - Technical Session  
 Abst - Abstracts  
 U - University

Note: All localities mentioned are in New York State.

Mtg No	Year	Host Institution	Mtg Locality	Dates	President	Editor of		# of pp	TS Abst pp	Permanent (*Executive) Secretary	Attendance
						Guidebook Incl Panel	Discussions & Symposia				
27	1955	Colgate U	Hamilton	5/13-14	John G. Woodruff	Staff	Staff	47		K.E. Lowe	251
28	1956	U of Rochester	Rochester	5/4-5/6	William R. Evitt	Staff	Staff	123		K.E. Lowe	236
29	1957	NY State Geol S	Wellsville	5/9-12	Wilber H. Young	W.L. Kreidler	W.L. Kreidler	66		K.E. Lowe	248
30	1958	CCNY	Peekskill	5/9-11	Kurt E. Lowe	K.E. Lowe	K.E. Lowe	65		K.E. Lowe	267
31	1959	Cornell U	Ithaca	5/8-9	M. Storrs Cole	J.W. Wells	J.W. Wells	45		K.E. Lowe	278
32	1960	Hamilton C	Clinton	5/13-14	David Hawley	D.B. Potter	D.B. Potter	68		K.E. Lowe	254
33	1961	RPI	Troy	5/12-13	Joseph Rosenholtz	R.G. LaFleur	R.G. LaFleur	100		K.E. Lowe	329
34	1962	Brooklyn C	Port Jervis	5/4-6	Wilbur G. Valentine	W.G. Valentine	W.G. Valentine	90		K.E. Lowe	341
35	1963	SUNY at Binghamton	Binghamton	5/3-4	Donald R. Coates	D.R. Coates	D.R. Coates	111		K.E. Lowe	357
36	1964	Syracuse U	Syracuse	5/8-10	John J. Prucha	J.J. Prucha	J.J. Prucha	127	26	K.E. Lowe	406
37	1965	Union C	Schenectady	4/30-5/2	Philip C. Hewitt	Leo M. Hall	Leo M. Hall	120	7	K.E. Lowe	435
38	1966	SUNY at Buffalo	Niagara Falls	4/29-5/1	Edward J. Buehler	E.J. Buehler	E.J. Buehler	97	32	K.E. Lowe	325
39	1967	SUNY at New Paltz	Newburgh	5/5-7	Russel H. Waines	R.H. Waines	R.H. Waines	139	10	K.E. Lowe	378
40	1968	Queens C, CUNY	Flushing	5/3-5	Lawrence B. Gillett	R.M. Finks	R.M. Finks	251	8	P.C. Hewitt	350
41	1969	SUNY at Plattsburg	Plattsburg	5/2-4	Walter S. Newman	S.G. Barnett	S.G. Barnett	163	9	P.C. Hewitt	247
42	1970	SUNY at Cortland	Cortland	5/1-3	W. Graham Heaslip	W.G. Heaslip	W.G. Heaslip	141	5	P.C. Hewitt	257
43	1971	SUNY at Potsdam	Potsdam	5/7-8	Neal R. O'Brien	B.B. VanDiver	B.B. VanDiver	148	6	P.C. Hewitt	281
44	1972	Colgate U/Utica C	Utica	9/15-17	James McLelland	J. McLelland	J. McLelland	277		P.C. Hewitt	276
45	1973	SUNY at Brockport & Monroe CoC	Rochester	9/28-30	Philip C. Hewitt	P.C. Hewitt	P.C. Hewitt	177		D.F. Merriam	342
46	1974	SUNY at Fredonia	Fredonia	10/18-20	Oicott Gates	D.N. Peterson	D.N. Peterson	187		D.F. Merriam	321
47	1975	Hofstra U	Hempstead	10/31-11/2	Manfred P. Wolff	M.P. Wolff	M.P. Wolff	327		D.F. Merriam	290
48	1976	Vassar C	Poughkeepsie	10/15-17	John H. Johnsen	J.H. Johnsen	J.H. Johnsen	297		D.F. Merriam	288
49	1977	SUNY at Oneonta	Oneonta	9/16-18	P. Jay Fleisher	P.C. Willson	P.C. Willson	425		D.F. Merriam	430
50	1978	Syracuse U	Syracuse	9/22-24	Daniel F. Merriam	D.F. Merriam	D.F. Merriam			M.P. Wolff	

\*After 1970.

central New York colleges to be held at Clinton and Little Falls, New York on the 15th and 16th of May. "Program by" our field director Dr. N.C. Dale of Hamilton College" to include:

Friday, May 15, 11:00 AM: "Gathering of the clan at Knox Hall, Hamilton College campus" followed by "luncheon at College Commons".

Friday afternoon: Organization of "field parties for the study of the iron ore deposits and Silurian formations in the immediate vicinity of Clinton, possibly extending operations as far as the famous Devonian section at Oriskany Falls"

Friday evening: "Dinner at the Yahnundasis Country Club in the outskirts of Utica, price \$1.50 per plate, the exact time to be announced later. A lecture on the geographical and historical significance of the Gorge of the Mohawk River at Little Falls will probably be delivered at this time, the attempt being made to obtain Dr. Albert Perry Brigham of Colgate University as speaker."

Saturday, May 16: "The party will journey to Little Falls either by rail, auto or trolley, where the day will be spent studying preCambrian and early Paleozoic structures and stratigraphy. If time permits, an interesting side trip can be taken to the historic Herkimer homestead near Little Falls."

The director (or secretary) will arrange for "accommodations in Utica hotels, on request". He will also prepare "a section of the Paleozoic of the Oriskany Valley and fossil lists which will be distributed later." The secretary then requests early information on the approximate number from each institution planning to attend luncheon and dinner on Friday.

The letter concludes prophetically: "Trusting that this coming first excursion may be enjoyed by all and that it may be the beginning of annual gatherings of like character for our mutual benefit and the fuller knowledge of our great out-of-door science, I remain faithfully yours

Harry N. Eaton, Secretary"

This is all that has come down to us from that initial meeting more than half a century ago. We are left to speculate on the nature and extent of earlier discussions and communications between geology faculty members of the "central New York colleges" which must have preceded this first "call to meeting". Considering the Association's subsequent history, we can only assume that the program as planned was carried out successfully. We do not know the number of participants, but would guess that it was rather small and probably included mostly faculty members at this early stage.

#### THE EARLY YEARS (1926-1941)

The time for "annual gatherings of like character" had indeed arrived.

The 1926 "get-together" at Syracuse University provided a mimeographed program with annotated lists of field stops, a correlation chart and structural data on the East Oriskany quarries. Also, in October of the same year Prof. Harold L. Alling of the University of Rochester mentioned in a letter to Prof. Thomas W. Hills of Vassar College, the host institution for 1927:

"I have been using the name "The New York State Geological Association". How does it strike you?" Professor Hills evidently agreed because the program of the 1927 meeting carried the new name on its masthead where it has appeared ever since.

It is interesting to note that some of the procedures followed at the first two meetings became virtually customs for many years to come. Until 1972 annual meetings continued to be held on a spring weekend between mid-April and the end of May. The preferred scheduling called for arrival at the meeting locality at noon on Friday, just in time for luncheon (occasionally offered by the host free-of-charge) which probably was deemed necessary to supply the energy needed for the afternoon field trip and to tide the participants over until the "official" evening dinner (often featuring an invited guest speaker). A half-day or full-day field trip on Saturday then brought the meeting to a close.

Until World War II forced temporary discontinuance of activities (1942 through 1945), relatively few innovations were made in the conduct of meetings, although the host institution had a completely free hand in planning and organizing their meetings. The first time that the meeting locality differed from that of the host institution was in 1929 (5th meeting) when Gouverneur, New York served as meeting headquarters with St. Lawrence University located at Canton, New York (25 miles distant) acting as host.

The 12th meeting (1936) proved to be unique because it was held at Scranton, Pennsylvania and hosted by the Pennsylvania Geological Survey, the only time that the Association extended its activities beyond the borders of New York State. Participants were also treated to the first detailed itinerary complete with distances in tenths of miles.

A few years later another unusual event occurred when the Chamber of Commerce, representing the town of Catskill, New York and its citizens, hosted the 1940 meeting. The moving spirit behind this invitation was the Association President, George H. Chadwick, a native of Catskill and for many years Professor of Geology at St. Lawrence and Rochester Universities. He was a renowned expert on the geology of the Catskill mountain region with particular emphasis on its Silurian and Devonian stratigraphy and structural features.

Although complete registration rosters are available for only two meetings in these early years (see Table 1), they reveal a remarkably large and varied attendance as shown here.

	<u>1929 (5th Mtg.)</u>		<u>1930 (6th Mtg.)</u>
<u>Attendance:</u>			
Faculty	25	} 38 = 19%	30
Professional Geologists & other adults	13		17
			} 47 = 24%
Students	160	= 81%	152 = 76%
Total Attendance	198		199
<u>Institutions Represented</u>			
Colleges & Universities	10		21
Government agencies	2		3
Industrial organizations	7		1
Total number of Institutions	19		25

The large attendance figures are surprising indeed when compared with those of the meetings after 1954 (see Table 2). Furthermore, the well-known student-oriented nature of the Association evidently was established very early. A few faculty members seem to have brought along entire undergraduate geology classes as suggested by student attendance of 52 from St. Lawrence University (1929) and 48 from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (1930). Such attendance procedures, however, did not go unnoticed as pointed out by Prof. O.D. von Engel, the Association secretary, in the preliminary announcement (dated 8 April 1931) for the Port Henry meeting. He concluded his letter with the following paragraph:

"I may add that there seems to be a general feeling that undergraduates who are not seriously interested and go just for the ride or the diversion from school work should be discouraged from making the trip. Of course, if such an undergraduate owns a car and will furnish the transportation for some of the more seriously inclined students, it would be a bad policy to head him or her off. No doubt these comments will sufficiently give you the idea."

One cannot help wondering just how trip leaders managed the field logistics considering the fact that only one trip was offered at any one time and private cars were the only mode of transportation mentioned. Car caravans of great lengths snaking across hill and dale and raising large clouds of dust must have been a sight to behold!

#### THE POST-WAR YEARS (1946-1953)

During World War II no meetings were held from 1942 through 1945. Consequently, meeting No. 17 of 1941 was followed by meeting No. 18 of 1946. T.M. Mills and A.S. Warthin Jr. of Vassar College, who had been

chosen to conduct the cancelled 1942 meeting, wrote to the "member institutions" on 21 September 1945 offering to host the "customary two-day meeting next Spring". One paragraph of this letter is worth repeating because it clearly states the original purpose of the Association.

"At this time we think it in order to restate the primary aim of these meetings. They were originally set up to give the students in the member colleges a chance to see other parts of the State in the field. At some meetings it has seemed to us that the aim was a little obscured, and that the meeting was conducted on more of a professional level, for the benefit of the faculty members attending. With the formation of the North-eastern Section of the G.S.A., the professional interest can perhaps be best taken care of by meetings of that Section, leaving us to care more specifically for the students."

It appears that the Association got back into the "old groove" without difficulty and continued to operate with little change in the pre-War style.

At the Cornell University meeting (No. 21, 1949) buses were used for the first time as exclusive field transportation with the overwhelming approval of the Association (by mail ballot). The cost per person was 75 cents for Friday afternoon and \$1.75 for all-day Saturday. And while we are mentioning prices, the cost of the annual dinner was \$1.85 and a field lunch went for 75 cents. Who said that there were no "good old days"?

The records of the Silver Anniversary meeting at Syracuse (No. 22, 1950) included a detailed list of registrants permitting the following break-down:

<u>Meeting No. 22, 1950:</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Institutions represented</u>
Faculty	40)	Colleges & Universities 19 Government agencies 5 & Museums Industrial Organizations 1
Professional, Government & other geologists	20) 24%	
Students	187) 76%	
<u>Total attendance</u>	<u>247</u>	<u>Total number</u> 25

A comparison with the previously cited attendance figures for the 6th meeting of 1930 shows an astoundingly identical ratio of adult/student attendance and total number of institutions represented. Except for a 25 percent increase in total attendance, little had changed indeed in 20 years.

In 1951, the New York State Geological Survey, for the first time, acted as host for the 23rd meeting at Plattsburg in the eastern Adirondacks.

The 25th meeting (1953) at St. Lawrence University probably is best remembered for its singularly cold, wet, and thoroughly uncomfortable field weather. In fact, the City College of N.Y. contingent, starting for

home at about noon on Saturday, May 2, had to battle a raging Adirondack blizzard and barely managed to reach food and shelter at Lake Placid by nightfall, with some 15 inches of snow on the ground. But history already had been made at the business meeting of the Association on the preceding evening, May 1. As a result of repeated complaints about lack of coordination and continuity in Association activities (particularly concerning mailing lists) from meeting to meeting, Kurt E. Lowe proposed the election of a Permanent Secretary as the only continuing officer of the Association. The venerable New England Intercollegiate Geologic Conference, active since 1901 and operating successfully with such an officer, was cited as an example. Upon acceptance of the proposal, Kurt Lowe nominated Dr. John G. Broughton, the New York State Geologist, as the logical candidate to fill the new position. But to his surprise, Dr. Lowe himself also was nominated and then elected the first Permanent Secretary, an office he was to hold for 14 years.

#### AGE OF "THE" SECRETARIES:

The LOWE Epoch - 1954 - 1967

The new Permanent Secretary was facing a future of great uncertainty in the absence of any instructions or guidelines offered by the Association which seemed to say: "You thought of it, now go ahead and do it."

Considering the obviously successful development of the Association since 1925, despite loose operational procedures and a sometimes lack of conformity, the Secretary made two basic commitments (to himself), viz.,

1. to maintain the informal, friendly albeit occasionally "loose" conduct of activities, and
2. to continue fostering the original concept of "student-orientation" at Association meetings and on field trips.

He then proceeded to concentrate on improvements in communication, record keeping, financial responsibility, publications and operational continuity in general, roughly in that order.

On 8 January, 1954 a rather lengthy, 3-part questionnaire was sent to all New York State Institutions listed in the AGI Directory of Geology Departments in the U.S. and Canada and to some out-of-State Colleges and Universities whose representatives had attended Association meetings in the past. New York government agencies and a few professional geologists also were included in this mailing. The excellent (78%) response to this inquiry enabled the fledgling Secretary to prepare summary statistics on all past meetings (1925 - 1953), listing dates, host institutions and meeting localities as well as New York Institutions which had never served as host and regions within the State which had not been visited up to that time.

This information was presented and distributed at the Association business meeting in 1954 (Poughkeepsie) as the First Annual Report of the Permanent Secretary, initiating a procedure which was followed

annually until 1972 (Nineteenth Annual Report).

The Second Annual Report of 1955 set the basic pattern of presentation, viz.,

1. Resume of previous year's business meeting;
2. Attendance statistics of previous year's meeting;
3. Mailing Roster Information: Number of institutions and individuals on roster; changes and limitations introduced from time to time;
4. Permanent Record File: Contributions received and records needed;
5. Proposals for Association action at current meeting;
6. Treasury Report: The initial treasury of \$69.50 came from registration fees at the 1954 meeting. By May of 1955 the cash balance had shrunk to \$6.09. Not until 1959 did the treasury reach a healthy balance of \$219.64.

These annual reports then high-lighted significant developments and innovations in Association affairs.

The first "pre-registration with payment" forms introduced at the 1957 (Wellsville) meeting proved so successful that it became standard operating procedure from then on.

Although the first spiral-ring bound field-trip guidebook was prepared for the 1956 (Rochester) meeting, no extra copies for post-meeting distribution were available for either the 1956 or 1957 Guidebooks. The 1958 (Peerskill) meeting, however, provided a sizable stock of guidebooks for post-meeting sale, which was so brisk that the Secretary found himself with the added responsibility of stocking and filling orders for annual guidebooks with the attendant financial headaches. As time went on, out-of-stock items had to be reprinted further increasing the Secretary's work load. But to this day, all 21 guidebooks from 1957 to 1977 are available for purchase.

Starting with the Sixth Annual Report (1959), statistics on guidebook sales and inventory were included. In addition, yearly lists of available guidebooks, their cost and table of contents (as long as this proved feasible) were made available.

The Seventh Annual Report (1960) included the financial statement of the 1959 meeting submitted by the host institution (Cornell U.) to serve as a guide for future hosts. This feature also became a standard report item.

At the 1963 meeting, Dr. John J. Prucha's proposal to include a  $\frac{1}{2}$  day Technical Session for the presentation of student papers in the program of the annual meeting was accepted. The first of 8 similar consecutive, annual sessions was held at Syracuse in 1964. Abstracts of papers were printed as part of the guidebook or as separate stapled pamphlets (see Table 2). It should be noted, however, that the Technical Session at Queens College (1968) consisted of two  $\frac{1}{2}$  day symposia on problems of regional geology presented entirely by faculty members and professional

geologists. For reasons that are not clear, Technical Sessions were dropped from the Association activities after the 1971 (Potsdam) meeting.

A matter of periodic concern was the fluctuation in meeting attendance. Following the low registration figure of 146 (1954), attendance abruptly increased to 251 (1955) and leveled off between 250 and 280 until 1961 (Troy) when it spurted again to 329, starting an unprecedented climb to the peak of 435 in 1965 (Schenectady). The rapid change brought about by the large number of registrants presented serious problems of planning and logistics for smaller host institutions with somewhat limited facilities for food and lodging. Also, the number of simultaneous field trips offered had to be increased sharply to accommodate the large crowd, thus placing additional burden on the departmental staff.

Bus transportation became a "must" for all but a few of the "last-day" field trips. The Secretary, from time to time, reminded faculty members to limit student attendance to graduate students and bona fide undergraduate majors. Students accounted for 52 percent of attendance in 1954, rising to a high of 78 percent in 1957 and then decreasing slowly to 51 percent by 1966. These figures stayed between 39 and 50 percent from 1967 to 1971 (the last year for which such information is available).

At the 1966 meeting at Niagara Falls, the Association surprised the Permanent Secretary with an engraved plaque "in recognition of exceptional contributions in service to the Association since 1953", which was deeply appreciated. Little did the Association or the recipient suspect that the Lowe Epoch had just about run its course. Following a heart attack in the Spring of 1967 (from which he obviously recovered), the first Permanent Secretary had to resign from his somewhat less than permanent post. The Fourteenth Annual Report contained his resignation and outlined orderly procedures for the transfer of records and stock of guidebooks to a new Secretary by September 1967.

#### The HEWITT Interval - 1968-1972

Philip C. Hewitt of SUNY at Brockport, former Association president (1965), was elected as the second Permanent Secretary with the understanding that "permanence" be replaced by a specific period of service at a later date.

The Annual Reports of the Secretary were continued essentially in the style and format as had been established over the years. After dropping below the 400 mark following the 1965 meeting, attendance ranged between a manageable 250 to 350 from 1968 to 1972. Treasury balances rose beyond the \$1000.00 level and reached \$3627.45 by 1972. Such funds had become necessary to pay for the ever rising cost of reprinting a growing number of older guidebooks. Also, guidebooks continued to grow in length (see Table 2 for number of pages) with the offering of multiple field trips and a more detailed and sophisticated presentation of data, often using numerous illustrations. The 66 pages of the 1957 (Wellsville) guidebook expanded in 20 years to 425 pages of the 1977

(Oneonta) book.

Secretary Hewitt's particular concern was the Association's tax status (considering the increasing treasury balances) and its potential incorporation to remove legal responsibility from any one individual in the event of an accident on an Association field trip. He soon discovered that the basic requirement was presentation of a formal constitution and bylaws without which the Association had flourished for over 40 years. He promptly convinced his predecessor and friend, Kurt Lowe, to accept the appointment as a Committee of one to draw up the required documents. This was done by simply putting the operating procedures which had become established through routine into the legal form of a constitution and bylaws. Some minor additions and changes were made, particularly limiting the length of the Secretary's term to 6 years and changing his title from Permanent to Executive Secretary.

The new constitution was presented for the Association's approval at the 1970 (Cortland) business meeting. The only provision which caused considerable argument was the proposed exclusion of student from full (voting) membership owing to their transient status. Although this clause gained approval at this (1970) meeting, the Association amended the constitution in 1971 (Potsdam) to grant students the vote on Association affairs at annual business meetings but excluded them from the permanent mailing roster. Another amendment was added to provide for a Board of Directors consisting of the current president, the executive secretary and the two most recent past presidents.

Another major change took place at the 1971 meeting when the scheduled hosts for the 1972 meeting, Colgate U. and Utica C., asked for postponement until the Fall Term because they would not be able to get ready for the usual Spring meeting. There also had been a growing desire to shift meetings to the Fall season even though it would make it more difficult to avoid conflicts with meeting schedules of the New England Intercollegiate Geologic Conference, The Geological Society of America, and other geologic organizations. The dissatisfaction with Spring meetings had developed as a result of changes in College calendars bringing the Spring Term to a close as early as the middle of May. The Association then would have to meet no later than the third week in April when the weather is generally inclement, cold and wet, particularly in upstate New York. The Association agreed to hold its 1972 meeting from September 15 to 17 on a "trial" basis, which promptly became an established procedure (see Table 2).

Hewitt, although elected for a 6-year term, decided understandably that service for 5 years was enough considering the steadily increasing work load in connection with the sale and distribution of guidebooks numbering 15 at the time. He appointed a Committee in 1971 to nominate a new Secretary for election in 1972.

#### The MERRIAM Stage - 1973-1977

Daniel F. Merriam of Syracuse University was nominated and elected

Executive Secretary at Utica (1972). The Association had arrived at another stage in its development. With the internal functioning of the organization now following a well-established operational routine, the new Secretary could direct his attention to the Association's external relations with the geologic profession, governmental agencies, and concerned public interest groups, a process which his predecessor Hewitt had initiated.

The tax exemption and incorporation quests were pursued actively but faced a seemingly unending series of bureaucratic obstacles and delays. The new constitution and bylaws had to be reviewed and audited, followed by changes in the wording of the documents which then had to be approved by the membership. Actually, the Internal Revenue Service was less troublesome than the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance which had to give its approval before the exemption could become a reality. The official notification of our tax-free status was not received until Merriam's term had expired .....5 years later.

Merriam established contact with the American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG) leading to the affiliation of the NYSGA with AAPG, which was approved by the membership at the 1974 (Fredonia) meeting. The Association now elects 2 representatives and 2 alternates to the house of delegates of AAPG.

The 1974 meeting also was made aware of the threatened destruction of the spectacular potholes on Moss Island at Little Falls by the planned construction of a 4-lane highway bridge to be anchored on the Island. A committee consisting of David Hawley (Hamilton C.), chairman, Ernest H. Muller (Syracuse U.), and Herman S. Muskatt (Utica C.) was appointed to look into the matter and to recommend action by the Association. H. Muskatt, reporting for the Committee at the 1975 (Hempstead) and 1976 (Poughkeepsie) meetings, kept the membership informed of the continuing efforts in support of local organizations to preserve the Island as a "Geologic landmark". Finally, the Committee could report relocation of the bridge and preservation of Moss Island at the 1977 (Oneonta) meeting with justifiable pride in the Association's endeavor in the public interest.

During Merriam's term of office the Annual Reports of the Secretary were replaced by (temporarily, we hope) Minutes of Meetings which gave more detailed information than the "resume" previously supplied. But owing to their preparation soon after the close of the annual meetings, they included only sketchy information on meeting attendance, meeting finances, and similar factual data which had proven so helpful to the authors of this history.

The stock of guidebooks was replenished to meet the rise in demand resulting from advertisements appearing State-wide and in Geotimes. The considerable cost involved is indicated by the drop of the Treasury balance from \$4489.85 in 1974 to \$614.84 in 1976.

The Committee on Organization, Philip C. Hewitt (SUNY at Brockport), chairman, William D. Romey (St. Lawrence U.), and Robert M. Finks (Queens C.)

had been charged with (1) determining the advisability of a more organized structure of the Association including dues and a full slate of officers; (2) considering the possibility of contracting a central printing service to reduce the cost of reprinting guidebooks; and (3) reviewing existing conditions which might favor the return of the annual meetings to the Spring Term. A questionnaire concerned with these subjects was distributed to all participants at the 1977 meeting and a definitive Committee report is expected in 1978.

Following Hewitt's example, Merriam also anticipated the end of his term of office after 5 (rather than 6) years and charged the Nominating Committee with proposing a candidate for Executive Secretary to be elected at the 1977 meeting.

#### The WOLFF Future - 1978 - ?

With the election of Manfred P. Wolff of Hofstra University as Executive Secretary and the election of Daniel F. Merriam to the Presidency of the Association for 1978, we have at last reached the present and can look confidently to the future. Fred, as he is known to one and all, took an immediate and firm hold of Association affairs. A new 1978 price list for guidebooks was prepared showing costs of individual copies ranging from \$7.00 (1957) to \$15.00 (1977) or \$210.00 for the entire sequence of 21 (including a second, special guidebook prepared for the 1976 meeting). In order to reduce the cost to libraries, all guidebooks starting with 1956 (Rochester), which is not available in book form, were photographed on microfiche and may be obtained as a complete set of 22 items for \$88.00. Individual guidebooks on microfiche range from \$2.00 (1957) to \$10.00 (1977). A 20 percent discount is provided for all students submitting a student verification form (printed on price list). The reverse side has a "thumb-nail" history of the Association which preceded the present effort.

Fred also is following through on Dan Merriam's suggestion to explore the possibility of affiliating with the National Association of Geology Teachers (NAGT).

We now look forward to the promising future of a stable, well-organized, although "informal" society under the leadership of dedicated "public servants", the Executive Secretaries. We believe that Nelson Dale and Harry Eaton, the founding fathers of the Association would be pleased with the results of their initiative ... 50 years later.